

City of Middletown
Parks & Recreation Department
100 Riverview Center
Suite 140
Middletown, Connecticut 06457

Parks & Recreation Commission Minutes of June 7, 2012
Held at the Recreation Department Office at 100 Riverview Center

Present: Commissioners Gerry Winzer, Phil Pessina, Todd Berch, Tony Jaskot, Sheila Jones. Director Raymond Santostefano, and Superintendent John Milardo, representing the Parks and Recreation Department.

Absent: Commissioner Rick Romano and Student Representatives Dhruvi Pate and Malcolm Alleyne.

Call: Chairman Winzer called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm, in the main room of the Recreation Office, at 100 Riverview Center, Suite 140.

Public Hearing: No members of the public present to speak.

Minutes: Chairman Winzer requested a motion be made accepting the Parks and Recreation Commission minutes of May 3, 2012.

Vote: The Parks & Recreation Commission minutes were unanimously approved. Commissioners Pessina and Berch abstained.

Correspondence: None

Department Reports: Director Santostefano discussed several issues with regard to the Parks Division including all 26 fields are in use every day, we have summer adult lacrosse and soccer, repaired the boardwalk, hosed and sanitized the tunnel, top dressed Country Club Road where the kids are still playing. Long Hill Road should have 6 inches of top soil, debris free, but it's not nearly ready. There is a new hot water heater at the Palmer Field concession installed by department staff, veterans' pool was scraped and repainted, the pool looks great and Union Park for Memorial Day was rototilled, installed a new sign outside City Hall for recreation advertising. The lavatories at Harbor Park were painted. The fountain motor at Spears Park is being repaired/replaced. Parks is short one employee with the retirement of Ken Crescimano. A discussion about having another night worker was conducted with several Commissioners. It was determined that a regular daytime worker was the only option for this replacement.

Director Santostefano reported in the Recreation Division the staff constructed a float for the Memorial Day parade with the Parks Department's help, they volunteered the day of the parade. Spring Basketball had 36 participants; flag football was very popular, Ray Jacobs Scholarship Fund has \$1,865, numerous activities in the inclusion program including baking, Unified Theater and a field trip to the batting cages. The Lady

Catherine Cruise was changed due to bad weather and we lost 40 participants with the date change, everyone had a great time. Lake Quassy had 35 participants. Judge Marino spoke to the grandparents group. Senior Resources gave \$1,400 for children raised by grandparents to attend summer camp. We constantly use mass email to keep our participants informed of new programs and changes. Inclusion program also had family movies, MARC on Saturdays, and more. We are holding CPR/lifeguard training. The BOE is going to donate a carryall for two weeks, met with the BOE regarding overtime when we use the schools. Joe Samolis supported our decision to use only one custodian when we use the gym and the pool. The BOE wanted us to pay for two custodians. We agreed to split the disputed amount and move forward with only one custodian. Sal Nesci reported that a certified pool person need only be available, not necessarily on site during the use of the pool. We also had a DEP boating class, Kumsajado and adult exercise.

There was a discussion about a sign for the Ray Jacobs Field. Commissioner Pessina wanted to have a ceremony when the sign was installed. Director Santostefano thought that it might be too much for Norma Jacobs. She was very happy with the presentation at the Common Council and he would inform her when the sign was in place to see if she would attend a ceremony.

Miscellaneous: None

Old Business: Snow Machine: A CNR line item is in place to purchase a snow machine for Veterans Park. This is a 3 year line item. All of the necessary water and electrical needs are available at Veteran's Park. This would have been used this last year with the weather we had. It only requires 39 degrees. The Mayor doesn't want the Director to purchase the snow machine. We have the line item, approved by the Common Council and now the money will go back to the general fund. With the timing of the Mayor's refusal to purchase this item, the department cannot get something else with the money because the fiscal year is over. Commissioner Pessina asked if the Common Council is aware of this and inquired does the Mayor have the right to veto it? He thinks the Mayor can delay it, but not deny it. Planning Conservation Director Bill Warner showed a design of Veteran's Park with new trees, playscape, splash pad, snow machine and Dog Park that would be bonded in the future. Chairman Winzer asked if the Commission should do a motion to ask Tim Lynch if the Mayor can deny the purchase of the snow machine or table the project. Director Santostefano said if you table it, you lose the snow machine because purchase orders need to be in place by June 15th or the money goes back to the general fund. Commissioner Berch said he would talk to the Mayor and Councilman Serra to see what we can do.

New Business: The proposal for an additional night time employee was discussed. Commissioner Berch thought this was a union issue, not a commission issue. The position isn't even in the budget yet. There was a discussion about a night time employee and it was determined that the department needs one additional regular day worker.

Director Santostefano spoke regarding the sports grants that is now funded for \$36,000 instead of \$40,000 and will be advertised in the Middletown Press starting June 23rd and run throughout the month of July. Commissioner Jones informed the commission that the \$4,000 shortage was a mistake. The Common Council took 10% from every line item including contractual lines. She stated that Director Santostefano must go to the Finance and Government Committee to request the money be reinstated and then to the Common

Council. Director Santostefano told the commission that the Council also took it away from busing. He will be asking the Council to reinstate this money. Director Santostefano informed the commission that they will receive the sports grant applications in early August and they will be discussed at the September meeting.

Director Santostefano spoke about the renovations to the concession stand at Palmer Field. We asked the Common Council for \$85,000 in LoCIP money but they only gave us \$27,000 and advised us to use the \$58,000 that the department has in its advertising revenue account. The Common Council is requesting we bond for the concession stand. There was a discussion about the current concession stand, and new concession stand near the football field. Commissioner Berch spoke about a mobile concession stand that could be used in both locations, as well as at other sites. Superintendent Milardo advised him that he has researched them and found them to be favorable. They would cost approximately \$100,000; the Superintendent will research them further and report back to Director Santostefano.

Motion: Commissioner Berch made a motion to look into bids for a mobile concession stand by the September meeting, Commissioner Pessina seconded.

Vote: The motion was voted on with all in favor, none opposed. The motion passes.

Director Santostefano spoke about the Mayor's Task Force. He acknowledged Commissioner Berch for voting against the Parks Division being moved to Public Works. The Mayor's Chief of Staff, Joe Samolis stated that the Mayor is leaning toward not sending the Parks Department to Public Works Department. The Mayor will bring his recommendation to the Common Council. Chairman Winzer thanked Commissioner Berch for not supporting that move. Commissioner Pessina said that before he approves any changes he wants the benefits and costs outlined. He said that there should be workshop to discuss any changes. Commissioner Berch spoke about why the changes didn't get his approval.

Director Santostefano spoke about cancelling the July and August meetings due to vacations and this being the busiest season for the department. If there are any concerns, he will call a meeting.

Motion: Commissioner Jones made a motion to cancel the July and August, 2012 meetings. Commissioner Pessina seconded the motion.

Vote: The motion was voted on with all in favor. The motion passes.

Adjournment: Commissioner Jones made a motion to adjourn the meeting, which was seconded by Commissioner Pessina. It was a unanimous vote. Meeting adjourned at 7:35 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted by Christine Bourne